



# LOUISIANA STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE



## Project Overview

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) is committed to maintaining a current, viable transportation plan that helps guide the investment of public resources in Louisiana. The update to the 1996 *Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan* (SITP) confirms this commitment.

In the summer of 2000, the LDOTD and a consultant team led by Wilbur Smith Associates embarked together on the 2½-year task of updating the transportation plan. The existing SITP is multimodal in its approach, establishes measurable goals, defines objectives to achieve those goals and was developed in concert with the citizens of Louisiana. The SITP has served the LDOTD well by establishing a foundation for planning Louisiana's transportation infrastructure as it enters the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This legislation places more emphasis on accommodating freight movements, and using technology to make transportation systems more efficient. This is particularly important in Louisiana, where the efficiency of freight transport has a large bearing on the State's overall economic well being.

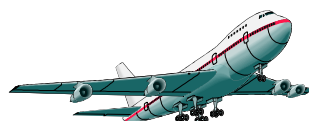
The link between a state's economy and good transportation has been firmly established, and

Louisiana wants to use transportation investments to improve the quality of life for its citizens. Federal funding was increased through TEA-21, but Louisiana wants to be assured that its level of infrastructure investment is sufficient to implement the goals set forth in the existing SITP and the *Louisiana Master Plan for Economic Development (Louisiana: Vision 2020)*, a 20-year economic development and strategic plan.



However, as time passes, conditions affecting the transportation environment change, and even far-reaching, innovative planning documents must be updated. Since the adoption of the SITP, Congress passed the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (TEA-21).

The *Statewide Transportation Plan Update* will continue developing the statewide transportation policy and planning framework so that these goals may be realized, today and over the next 30 years.



### LDOTD OFFICIALS

**Dr. Kam Movassaghi**  
Secretary  
**Blaise Carriere**  
Deputy Secretary

**Highways**  
**Bill Temple**  
Chief Engineer

**Management & Finance**  
**John Basilica**  
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**Gordon Nelson**  
Assistant Secretary

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**Curtis Patterson**  
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**Ken Perret**  
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# Dr. Movassaghi Addresses First Statewide Transportation Conference

Building upon the successful public involvement process implemented in developing the SITP, the LDOTD held a conference in New Orleans to initiate the *Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan Update*. The purpose of the conference was to provide stakeholders an update / status report and give the LDOTD staff an opportunity to listen to its

tomers. The audience listened respectfully to the viewpoints of the speakers and enthusiastically weighed in on how, where, why and by how much the LDOTD could improve transportation. Dr. Kam K. Movassaghi, Secretary of the LDOTD, was a major player in the conference. He presided over the conference, delivered his personal comments on the state of transportation in Louisiana, attended breakout sessions, and made himself available to answer questions offered during the conference. His personal commitment to this update process was evident throughout.

## Presenters at the First Statewide Conference:

**Kevin E. Cunningham**, Assistant Chief of Staff to the Governor

**Mark S. Smith**, Deputy Secretary, Louisiana Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

**Harold Price**, Assistant Secretary, Office of Commerce & Ind., Louisiana Dept. of Economic Development

**William A. Sussman**, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration

**James J. Murphy**, Ports & Environmental Officer, US Maritime Administration

**Eric Kalivoda**, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Planning & Programming, LDOTD

**Michael R. Conwell**, Senior VP, Hibernia Bank

**Arno Hart**, Senior Economist, Wilbur Smith Associates

**Ron Brinson**, President & CEO, Port of New Orleans

**Major Mark Oxley**, Louisiana State Police

**Dale A. Janik**, Project Director, Wilbur Smith Associates

The Department wants input on major transportation issues facing Louisiana over the next 30 years, including how to use public investment to reshape the economy and improve the state's quality of life.

The conference was attended by more than 175 persons representing every transportation mode, state and local government, educators, officials, state agencies, shippers, operators, the business community, and other interest groups. The LDOTD arranged for presentations / comments from a group of speakers that provided a sound basis for discussing the future of transportation in Louisiana. (see left sidebar)

On behalf of the Department, Dr. Movassaghi sees this plan update as an opportunity to take advantage of the many economic opportunities offered by the global market and tourism so Louisiana's citizens can be the beneficiaries of sound government decisions.

The consultant team and LDOTD staff also facilitated breakout sessions that allowed a more focused evaluation, and specialized exchange of ideas concerning Louisiana's separate modal systems. The breakout sessions were organized according to six major areas of transportation planning (Air Transportation, Freight Railroad, Ports & Waterways, Regional Planning Officials, Surface Intercity Passenger, and Trucking).

## Louisiana Airport System Plan

As part of the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update*, the *Louisiana Airport System Plan (LASP)* is being updated to reflect current conditions.

The development of a separate airport system plan is necessary for Louisiana to receive certain federal aviation funds. The *LASP* will examine the adequacy of Louisiana's current airport system as well as consider future aviation needs throughout the State. Deficiencies in the current and anticipated system will be identified and potential improvements for meeting those deficiencies will also be addressed.

This plan will assist the Aviation Division in making future development decisions.

The *Louisiana Airport System Plan* will include the following elements:

- Performance criteria and benchmarks
- Inventory
- Forecasts of demand
- Adequacy and deficiencies analysis
- Identify/review options
- Recommended plan

At the conclusion of the study, a technical report will be prepared to document the study's process and findings.

In addition to the traditional airport system plan, an examination of issues regarding the proposed regional airport between Baton Rouge and New Orleans will be conducted. This examination will not be initiated until the current studies regarding the new airport and New Orleans International are completed. The primary focus of the examination will be to provide the Aviation Division of LDOTD with an objective, independent, and factual review of the issue to help the Aviation Division create a policy stance on a major transportation investment.





## A Statewide Highway Travel Demand Model for Louisiana

A major element of the *Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan Update* focuses on development of a "Statewide Traffic Model" capable of producing reliable and timely traffic volume forecasts for Louisiana's rural intercity highways. Traffic forecasts for Louisiana's rural intercity highways are critically important information that impact many aspects of LDOTD's core business activities, including:

- Roadway planning and finance,
- Project programming, design and construction, and
- Roadway maintenance.

The new traffic model will include all major roads on the rural State Highway System, as well as other critical State and local roads.

The model will forecast both local and long distance auto and truck traffic. Future year forecasts will be developed for 2005, 2010, 2020 and 2030.

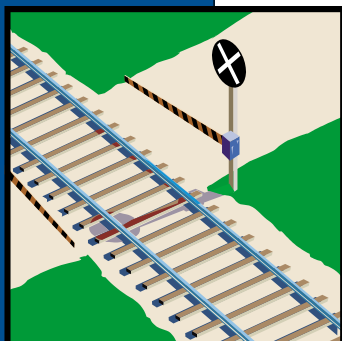
Development of a statewide traffic model is a complex and challenging undertaking. A series of three model design workshops are planned. The end result of these workshops will be a detailed blueprint for the new model. December, 2001 is the target date for completion of the model.

As part of the Statewide Traffic Model development process, the consultant team will also develop a Multimodal Commodity/Freight Database. This database will contain detailed information on existing and future commodity/freight movements to, from, within and through Louisiana. The database will include:

- Movements by truck, rail, water and air
- Information on international commodity/freight movements developed by Wilbur Smith Associates as part of the recently completed Latin American Trade & Transportation Study (LATS), and
- Parish-level data on domestic commodity/freight movements purchased from Reebe Associates.



The LDOTD will be able to use this database to identify the types and amounts of commodity/freight movements using the State's ports, railways and highways – information the LDOTD needs to address the many issues and infrastructure needs associated with existing and future commodity/freight movement.



## Louisiana State Rail Plan

Just as a well-planned system of air infrastructure is important to Louisiana's economic well being, so is a well-planned state rail system. As part of the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update*, the *Louisiana Statewide Rail System Plan* is also being updated to reflect current conditions.

The *Rail System Plan Update* will include the following elements:

- Assessment of trends affecting rail service in Louisiana;
- Inventory of the state rail system, including:
  - ~ Railroads operating in the state;
  - ~ Size of the system, and its various components;
  - ~ Changes in the system from previous plans; and
  - ~ Intermodal facilities and operations.

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## Louisiana State Rail Plan *(continued)*

- Analysis of freight traffic detailing the interstate, intrastate, and through tonnage flows of various commodities traveling over Louisiana's rail system.
- Analysis detailing the relative use of different components making up the state rail system.
- Update of the status of Louisiana's rail program:
  - ~ Goals and objectives;
  - ~ Role of the public; and
  - ~ Discussion of past, current, and future rail projects, including how these projects are to be funded, and any desired changes.

The *Statewide Rail System Plan Update* will conclude with a discussion of statewide and national issues that have bearing on rail operations in Louisiana.

As with the *Airport System Plan*, the development of a separate rail system plan is necessary for Louisiana to qualify for certain federal railroad funding.

## Get Involved!

LDOTD welcomes your comments, and encourages you to follow developments of the Update to the *Statewide Transportation Plan*. Involvement of the general public, as well as public agencies, is key to the successful update of the *Plan* that defines the future of transportation in Louisiana.

- Visit our project website at [www.lastateplan.org](http://www.lastateplan.org)
- Look forward to our upcoming newsletters
- To offer comments, or be added to the project mailing list, write us at the following address:



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